

# final report

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## Sustainable Feedbase Communication Coordinator

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## Executive summary

The purpose of the Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communication Coordinator role was to work with Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Sustainable Feedbase Resources (SFR) team to develop and implement internal communications strategies for research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities within the team's portfolio.

For this role, a project team, comprised of Macquarie Franklin and Hot Tin Roof Communications consultants, was selected through a competitive tender process. This role commenced in February 2016 and encompassed a range of tasks relating to the role objectives:

- improve internal communications within and between the SFR portfolio programs and projects;
- support MLA to showcase the opportunities created by SFR RD&A to improve the productivity and sustainable natural resource management of the feedbase resource; and
- through assisting MLA to enhance awareness of SFR RD&A outcomes and tools, encourage cattle and sheep producers in Australia to improve their productivity through implementation of improved practices.

The results from implementing the SFR Communications Coordinator have enabled progress towards the objectives of the role.

To improve internal communications within and between the SFR portfolio programs and projects, a feedbase RD&A database and newsletter (*Feedbase Focus*) were developed and four newsletters were circulated, with positive results. In addition, two national activities were run during 2016 (PRS producer workshop in Melbourne (June 2016) FIP and the symposium in Adelaide (November 2016)) and focus groups (or round table discussions) for PRS/FIP projects were run for each state in 2017.

In order to support MLA to showcase the opportunities created by SFR RD&A, to improve the productivity and sustainable natural resource management of the feedbase resource, 29 feedbase story briefs were supplied to the MLA Communications Team between February 2016 and October 2017, with 70% published to date. Some stories written specifically for *Feedbase Focus* were also distributed through *Friday Feedback*.

The SFR Communications Coordinator has also provided technical input to the development of a number of extension product and resource packages for red meat producers, advisors and researchers.

Many other tasks have been completed and assisted in raising the profile of the SFR portfolio and the outputs from research investments.

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# 1 Background

The purpose of the Sustainable Feedbase Communication Coordinator role was to work with Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Sustainable Feedbase Resources (SFR) team to develop and implement internal communications strategies for research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities within the team's portfolio (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

The Sustainable Feedbase Resource area comprised research, development and adoption (RD&A) programs related to the feedbase (pasture breeding, agronomy, grazing systems), natural resource management (soil, water, nutrients, biodiversity) and climate change (greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation to climate variability).

## Sustainable Feedbase Resource Portfolio

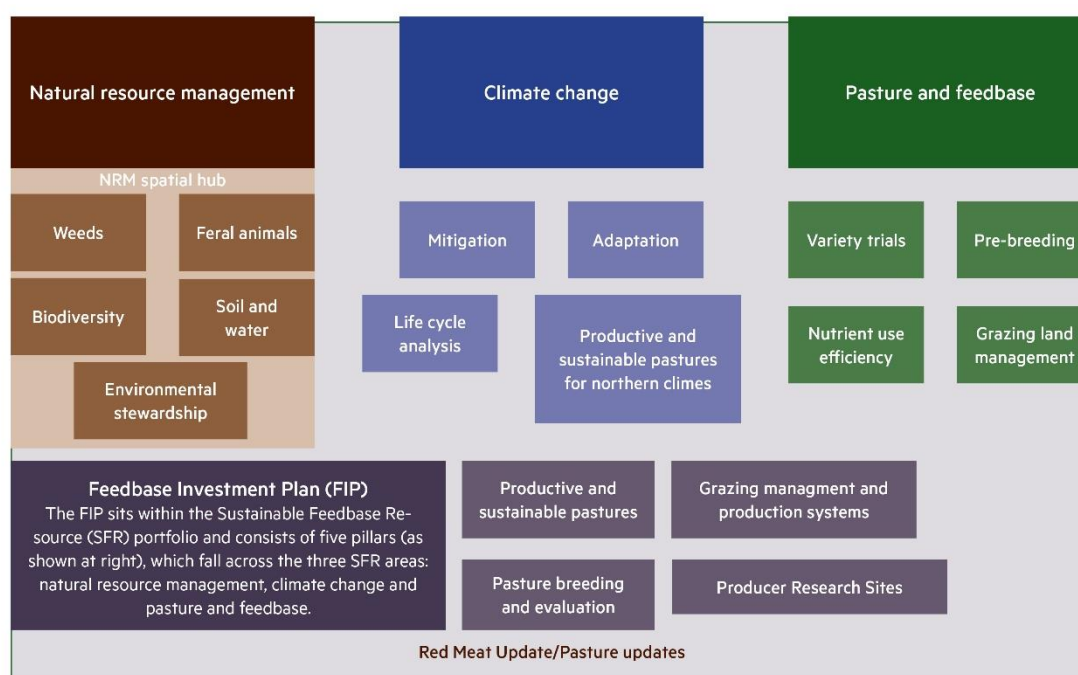


Figure 1 Schematic of the MLA sustainable feedbase resource portfolio (February 2016)

In 2015, MLA recognised considerable potential to optimise the outcomes from MLA's investment into this portfolio through strategic, coordinated and effective communications. Through a competitive tender process, a project team comprised of Macquarie Franklin and Hot Tin Roof Communications consultants was selected to provide technical communication support to MLA's Sustainable Feedbase Resources team. This role commenced in February 2016 and was called the SFR Communications Coordinator.

The key assignment of this role was to develop and implement a communication strategy to bring together the portfolio, to improve and increase communication outputs, outcomes and activities in relation to the sustainable feedbase resources area. It also included provision of support, as required, to other emerging feedbase communication tasks.

## 2 Project objectives

The objectives of the SFR Communications Coordinator role were to:

- improve internal communications within and between the SFR portfolio programs and projects;
- support MLA to showcase the opportunities created by SFR RD&A to improve the productivity and sustainable natural resource management of the feedbase resource; and
- through assisting MLA to enhance awareness of SFR RD&A outcomes and tools, encourage cattle and sheep producers in Australia to improve their productivity through implementation of improved practices.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Project establishment meeting

A project establishment meeting was held in Sydney in February 2016. This meeting included the MLA project manager, key MLA SFR portfolio staff, the MLA Corporate Publications and Communications Manager and the contracted consultants (Macquarie Franklin and Hot Tin Roof Communications). The purpose of the meeting was to transfer relevant knowledge to the consultants, refine the scope of the project and determine the next steps.

### 3.2 Implementation strategy

At the commencement of the project, in collaboration with the MLA project manager, an implementation strategy (Appendix 1) was developed to provide an overarching plan to guide the implementation of the SFR Communications Coordinator role.

The implementation strategy identified:

- the scope of the role and objectives of the SFR Communications Coordinator;
- the stakeholders involved in and/or who have an interest in SFR portfolio activities;
- the purpose of communications with SFR stakeholders; and
- the broad tactics to be used to achieve the overarching communications objectives of the role.

Details of specific tactics, including how and when they would be used, were incorporated into the Communications Implementation Plan (workplan).

### 3.3 Workplan

A shared workplan was developed in Smartsheet. All project team members had real time access to the workplan. Every six months the workplan was reviewed in detail and adjusted to reflect the emerging tasks.

### **3.4 Monitoring and evaluation plan**

A monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) plan for the SFR Communications Coordinator was developed (Appendix 2) to enable achievements resulting from the role to be recognised and attributed, enabling MLA to understand the cost-benefit of the role and to provide the information required to make a decision at the designated 'stop-go' point at the end of this contract, on the future of the role.

The MER plan also enabled adaptive management to be incorporated into project delivery by identifying and resolving any issues that may have impacted the ability of the project to meet its objectives, as the project progressed.

Underpinning the project objectives, the following key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed to clearly measure the project progress:

1. Project delivery tracking to workplan and budget.
2. A quarterly e-newsletter produced and distributed to the internal project stakeholders, with an initial 50% opening rate by respondents, which increases by 5% per annum over the life of the project.
3. A strategy for the development of internal stakeholder tools and resource packages to be developed ("I want to package" development strategy).
4. A seasonal calendar developed for the MLA Communications team, which summarises the key pasture management activities (relevant to MLA membership) by month for different regions across Australia, to enable MLA external communications to be targeted and timely. Calendar to be developed by September 2016 and reviewed annually.
5. A minimum of 16 story briefs provided to the MLA Communications Team each year for use in Friday feedback and Feedback Magazine (based on assuming one per Feedback Magazine, one per month for Friday Feedback), with 75% published.

### **3.5 Monthly project team meetings**

Project team meetings were held monthly to ensure strong communication between project team members and to progress actions identified throughout the implementation phase of the project. These meetings included the MLA project manager, MLA Corporate Publications and Communications Manager, Macquarie Franklin and Hot Tin roof Communications consultants.

### **3.6 Annual review**

An annual review was conducted in February 2017 in Sydney, where work for the previous year was reviewed and a workplan for 2017 finalised. This also involved reviewing and updating the implementation strategy and MER plan.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 February 2016 – October 2016

Progress during this period involved establishment and implementation activities, with outputs including:

- Sustainable Feedbase Communications Coordinator Implementation Strategy developed to guide the implementation of the role;
- Monitoring and evaluation plan developed to enable the impact of the Communications Coordinator role to be assessed and provide a mechanism for striving for continuous improvement;
- A risk assessment plan developed to enable project risks to be identified and mitigated;
- Connections and story briefs developed from attending the Producer Research Site Workshop in Melbourne in June 2016;
- Survey of Producer Research Site stakeholders delivered to identify their communication requirements and refine the plan for implementing effective internal communications;
- Monitoring and evaluation plan under development for MLA's broader Sustainable Feedbase Portfolio;
- 23 stories and/or story briefs submitted to the MLA communications team on R&D projects arising from MLA's Sustainable Feedbase Portfolio for inclusion in MLA's external communications activities (Appendix 1);
- Seasonal story calendar under development to assist with timing of release of feedbase related stories through MLA's external communication channels;
- Monitoring and evaluation plan template developed for the Pasture Updates program;
- Pasture Updates M&E plans for all States (Tas, Vic, NSW, SA & WA) reviewed;
- Framework developed for internal, quarterly newsletter for MLA's sustainable feedbase stakeholders – "Feedbase Focus - *Connecting MLA's sustainable feedbase R&D community*"; and
- Content for edition one of the internal newsletter in under development.

### 4.2 October 2016 – February 2017

By October 2016, the SFR Communications Coordinator was fully functional and implementing the workplan. Tasks completed during this period included:

- Undertake training in use of Traction e-newsletter software in Sydney;
- Develop content, template and branding for first edition of *Feedbase Focus*;
- Release of the first edition of *Feedbase Focus* (Spring 2016) to 121 recipients, achieving an opening rate of 67% and click through rate of 29%;
- Editing of Producer Research Site summary booklet for distribution to FIP Symposium participants;
- Attend FIP Symposium in Adelaide;
- Development of story briefs from attending the FIP Symposium in Adelaide, November 2016;
- Develop and implement survey of FIP symposium participants to collect stakeholder feedback on the FIP symposium and the FIP program;

- Three stories and/or story briefs submitted to the MLA communications team on R&D projects arising from MLA's Sustainable Feedbase Portfolio for inclusion in MLA's external communications activities (Appendix 2);
- Commence development of content for second edition of *Feedbase Focus* (Summer 2017), released 10 March 2017;
- Complete seasonal story calendar;
- Workplan for 2017 developed;
- Progress plan (status report) developed (Appendix 1); and
- Preparation for face to face meeting in Sydney on 21 February 2017.

### 4.3 February 2017 – October 2017

The annual review meeting was held in Sydney in February 2017, which enabled planning for 2017 project work to be finalised. Tasks completed between February and October 2017 included:

- Face-to-face meeting in Sydney with MLA on 21 February 2017;
- Workplan for 2017 approved;
- Annual update of the implementation strategy to guide implementation of the role;
- Annual update of the monitoring and evaluation plan developed to enable the impact of the Communications Coordinator role to be assessed and provide a mechanism for striving for continuous improvement;
- Regular updates and review of the risk assessment to enable project risks to be identified and mitigated;
- Development of content and release of *Feedbase Focus* edition 2 (March 2017);
- Development of content and release of *Feedbase Focus* edition 3 (May 2017);
- Development of content and release of *Feedbase Focus* edition 4 (September 2017);
- Completion of seasonal story calendar for assist MLA communications team;
- Delivery of story ideas and stories suitable for delivery through to *Feedback Magazine* and *Friday Feedback*
- Working with FIP / PRS program stakeholders to consolidate key messages from research, as well as discussing ideas about how to maximise the value of research outputs to industry and continue to improve future pasture research programs;
- Scoping of extension packages to support outputs from FIP / PRS projects;
- Scoping of novel soil health e-learning module to extend outputs from FIP / PRS projects and link to existing relevant extension products
- Development of communications plan for PVTN tool launch;
- Technical review of stories relating to PVTN tool launch;
- Strategic input and scoping to design soil health e-learning module;
- Coordinate PRS snapshots being completed;
- Attended PRS/FIP focus group meeting held in Sydney and Perth;
- Write up of focus group meeting outputs and report;
- Attend Red Meat Updates (Tasmania) and provision of story briefs to MLA communications team to progress for *Feedback Magazine* and *Friday Feedback*; and
- Support planning national workshop for the development of the feedbase RD&A portfolio extension brief.



## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Key performance indicators

Underpinning the project objectives, the following key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed to clearly measure the project progress:

1. Project delivery tracking to workplan and budget.
2. A quarterly e-newsletter produced and distributed to the internal project stakeholders, with an initial 50% opening rate by respondents, which increases by 5% per annum over the life of the project.
3. A strategy for the development of internal stakeholder tools and resource packages to be developed.
4. A seasonal calendar developed for the MLA Communications team, which summarises the key pasture management activities (relevant to MLA membership) by month for different regions across Australia, to enable MLA external communications to be targeted and timely.
5. A minimum of 16 story briefs provided to the MLA Communications Team each year for use in Friday feedback and Feedback Magazine (based on assuming one per Feedback Magazine, one per month for Friday Feedback), with 75% published.

The following outlines progress made against the project KPIs.

#### 5.1.1 Project tracking to budget

The workload of the SFR Communications Coordinator increased quickly after the establishment phase was complete. This resulted in many tasks being completed, as detailed in the workplan, as well as many other tasks that arose during the life of the project. The ability of the role to be flexible and address tasks as arose provided critical support to the MLA project manager and resulted in considerable outputs being delivered.

The project team engaged closely with the MLA project manager and provided regular updates on workplan and budget tracking throughout the project. Due to the timing and extent of tasks that emerged during the project, the budget allocated to the role was exhausted in October 2017.

A number of tasks that would benefit from specialist technical communication and extension skills will continue to arise in the coming months, as the outputs from the FIP are finalised and extended to the MLA membership.

#### 5.1.2 Quarterly e-newsletter

Four *Feedbase Focus* newsletters were released between October 2016 and October 2017.

The impact of the newsletter has been monitored using newsletter analytics to enable continuous improvement and engagement with the target audience. Metrics have included newsletter opening rates, click rates, unique page views and average time spent on page. There has been considerable variation in “success” on a story-by-story basis; with stories directly about pasture research rating highest, and less interest in other topics or where the focus is on extension.

The newsletter database is top heavy with pasture researchers, which may explain the higher opening rates of pasture-related articles. However, the aim of the newsletter was to improve communication across the SFR portfolio and between the stakeholders delivering RD&E in this space. Understanding the composition of the target audience and the “hooks” to get them interested in a broader range of stories has been important.

The newsletter is currently delivered to 452 recipients. Average open rates for the newsletter are sitting around 60% and the click rate since the first edition has risen steadily from 30.5% to 33.3%. While average time spent on each page varies according to topic and word length, articles of particular interest are engaging readers for up to five minutes. Newsletter analytics are provided in Appendix 3.

An effort has been made to keep articles to an upper limit of around 700 words and each edition of the newsletter has been developed according to feedback gained from the previous edition, while maintaining the overall objective of the approach to build a stronger network of communication among the feedbase research community.

### **5.1.3 Strategy for the development of tools and resource packages**

The SFR Communications Coordinator was involved in the development and running of two focus groups held in June 2017 in Sydney and Perth, where groups of stakeholders from PRS/FIP projects came together to capture the project outputs and plan for the next step in extending the outputs to red meat producers. During 2017, each State has harvested information about the learnings and extension needs arising from the FIP/PRS program.

Technical advice has been provided by the SFR Communications Coordinator to a number of extension resources being developed, include an e-learning platform for soil productivity resources, input to project fact sheets and review of the PVTN website.

A national workshop is under development for November 2017. This next step is to review the information collected and develop a national plan (extension brief) for how we best respond to the needs and ideas for extending outputs from the FIP program to producers and advisers.

The extension brief will identify the next steps: product development requirements, packaging of resources and how these will integrate into MLA’s extension and adoption programs.

There will be a role for the SFR Communications Coordinator (or equivalent) in developing and coordinating the feedbase extension brief.

### **5.1.4 Seasonal calendar**

A seasonal calendar to guide the release of communications to MLA members was developed and provided to the MLA Communications Team in early 2017. This included separate calendars for the southern and northern feedbase systems.

### 5.1.5 Story briefs provided to the MLA Communications Team

During the tenure of the SFR Communications Coordinator, the profile of the SFR portfolio has been advanced, through regular stories being identified and run in MLA's communication channels with producers.

While the role of the Communication Coordinator has not been to conduct external communications, it has had a key role in ensuring outputs and interesting stories from the SFR portfolio have been identified for communicating to MLA's membership via the MLA communications team or extension products.

A total of 29 stories and story briefs arising from SFR portfolio activities have been developed and provided to the MLA communications team (Appendix 4). Many of these have been published, or are scheduled for inclusion, in *Friday Feedback* and *Feedback Magazine*. To date the success rate for stories provided is around 70%, however a number of briefs have only recently been provided and are likely to be published in *Friday Feedback* and *Feedback Magazine* during the coming months.

Three stories developed specifically for *Feedbase Focus* have also been disseminated through *Friday Feedback* and in each case have received more than 300 page views.

## 6 Conclusions/recommendations

The purpose of the Sustainable Feedbase Communication Coordinator role has been to work with Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Sustainable Feedbase Resources (SFR) team to develop and implement internal communications strategies for research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities within the team's portfolio.

The results from implementing the SFR Communications Coordinator have enabled significant progress towards the objectives of the role, however there is continued opportunity to build on this and optimise the outcomes to industry.

With the Feedbase Investment Plan portfolio wrapping up, there will be a need for the SFR Communications Coordinator (or equivalent) to drive the development and coordinate the implementation of the feedbase extension brief over the next 18 months.

There are also new feedbase projects coming online and there is a need to continue the communications within this RD&A community. *Feedbase Focus* is now an established communication channel, specifically for this very targeted audience, which have very different information needs to MLA's producer oriented communication channels.

Feedbase throughout the project, from producers and researchers, is that there is mutual appreciation and value in MLA facilitating national events for networking and information sharing, relevant to the feedbase RD&A portfolio. There is opportunity to run a national event in 2018 to showcase outputs from the extension brief's implementation, find out about new feedbase projects, network to enable future collaborations between stakeholders and directly connect producers and researchers who have the same goal – a more profitable feedbase.

## **7 Appendix**

### **7.1 Appendix 1: Implementation strategy**



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## **SFR Communications Coordinator Implementation Strategy**

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May 2016



MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Implementation Strategy

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**Document status:** Final

Date	Issue number	Purpose of revision	Reviewed by	Authorised by
27/2/2016	DRAFT v1	Develop draft plan	CN, MR, LS	MR
16/5/16	DRAFT v2	Revise draft plan	CN, MR, LS	MR
11/7/2016	Final	Finalise draft	CN, MR	MR

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## 1 Background

### 1.1 Scope for the MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator role

The purpose of this role is to work with Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Sustainable Feedbase Resources (SFR) team to develop and implement internal communications strategies for research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities within the team's portfolio (see Appendices 1 and 2).

### 1.2 Role objectives

The objectives of the SFR Communications Coordinator role are to:

- improve internal communications within and between the SFR portfolio programs and projects;
- support MLA to showcase the opportunities created by SFR RD&A to improve the productivity and sustainable natural resource management of the feedbase resource; and
- through assisting MLA to enhance awareness of SFR RD&A outcomes and tools, encourage cattle and sheep producers in Australia to improve their productivity through implementation of improved practices.



## 2 Implementation Strategy

### 2.1 Implementation Strategy Purpose

The purpose of this Implementation Strategy is to provide an overarching plan to guide the implementation of the SFR Communications Coordinator role.

The Implementation Strategy identifies:

1. the scope of the role and objectives of the SFR Communications Coordinator
2. the stakeholders involved in and/or who have an interest in SFR portfolio activities
3. the purpose of communications with SFR stakeholders and
4. the broad tactics to be used to achieve the overarching communications objectives of the role.

Details of specific tactics, including how and when they will be used, will be incorporated into the Communications Implementation Plan (workplan).

### 2.2 Implementation Strategy Objectives

The objectives of this Implementation Strategy are to:

- support the effective implementation of the SFR Communications Coordinator role; and
- manage risks where identified.

The Implementation Strategy identifies the purpose for communication with the following stakeholder groups across the MLA SFR portfolio:

- Internal stakeholders (direct communication):
  - MLA management
  - internal MLA SFR portfolio managers
  - MLA communications team
  - SFR portfolio project partner communications teams
  - SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers
- External stakeholders (communication support role)
  - red meat producers
  - industry influencers (e.g. external researchers, extension service providers, advisors, agronomists, state departments, retailers, resellers and seed and fertiliser companies).

### 2.3 Implementation Strategy Tools and Tactics

The tools that will be used to achieve the objectives of this Implementation Strategy are referred to in Table 3.2 and can be separated into 'internal stakeholder tools' and 'external stakeholder tools'.

#### 2.3.1 Internal Stakeholder Tools

**Phone calls, emails and face-to-face meetings:** these standard communication tools will be used to conduct regular formal project team meetings, provide information regarding project progress and

MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Implementation Strategy

to manage any issues as they arise. Project team members will also communicate informally by phone, email and face-to-face as required to ensure the smooth implementation of project tasks.

The SFR Communications Coordinator will also carry out regular content planning meetings with the MLA communications team, SFR portfolio project partner communications teams and SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers by phone, email and, when the opportunity arises, face to face. The purpose of these meetings will be to identify potential content for MLA Communications channels such as, *Feedback Magazine*, Friday Feedback, MLA social media channels, Pasture Updates and Red Meat Updates.

**Milestone reports:** formal milestone reports will be used, as required by the contract, to deliver formal progress reports on the project and performance against agreed objectives.

**Dropbox:** a 'Dropbox' folder will be used to file all project documentation and artwork associated with the project and will be accessible by all project team members.

**Smartsheet:** an online 'Smartsheet' workplan will be used to drive the implementation of the Implementation Strategy and will be accessible by all project team members. The project smartsheet will outline tasks, timeframes and responsibilities for individual team members throughout the life of the project and will be updated as required.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** A monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan (MER) plan for the project will be developed. Implementation tasks will be incorporated in the Smartsheet workplan, to ensure seamless integration of M&E activities with other project activities.

**Seasonal SFR calendar:** a seasonally-relevant calendar of common on-farm feedbase-related activities and challenges will be developed to help the project team work with the MLA communications team to identify timely development and release of SFR stories.

**MLA pasture symposium:** The national pasture symposium will provide an opportunity and forum, in the initial project stages, to introduce the SFR Communications Coordinator role and objectives and to gather feedback from the SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers on the proposed communications approaches outlined in Table 3.2. The Symposium also will provide a key forum for the SFR Communications Coordinator team to source potential story ideas and better understand the SFR projects portfolio.

**Email updates:** a purpose-built email update template will provide a forum through which the SFR Communications Coordinator team can provide regular updates to the broad base of internal SFR stakeholders about current activities, achievements, team member profiles, tools and resources across the SFR portfolio. The updates will provide a forum for communication between research teams about challenges or successes they are having with their projects or allow them to showcase ideas and innovations that could be of benefit to other project teams. Each item included in the update will be limited to an introductory paragraph, which may contain a single image if relevant. The full story will then be housed on the SFR portfolio online communications hub. This approach

will ensure readers can quickly identify stories of interest, without having to trawl through long emails.

The email update will be developed using an online platform (Traction) that will facilitate immediate M&E for the project team to identify what information is of particular interest to internal stakeholders. This kind of feedback effectively enables a two-way 'conversation' and will allow the SFR Communications Coordinator to maintain the relevance and interest of this communication tool to meet SFR internal stakeholder needs.

### 2.3.2 External Stakeholder Tools

**MLA external communications channels:** The SFR Communications Coordinator will work with the MLA communications team, SFR portfolio project partner communications teams and SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers to identify relevant content from the SFR portfolio projects for delivery through: *Feedback Magazine*, Friday Feedback, MLA social media channels, MLA Pasture Updates and Red Meat Updates.

The role of the SFR Communications Coordinator will be identify projects that have relevant information to communicate and prepare a story brief (key points, contact details for writers to follow up and indication of appropriate release timing to target audience). The briefs will be supplied to the MLA Communications Team to follow up and develop content for external communications.

**Relevant industry communications channels:** The SFR Communications Coordinator will work with SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers, and industry networks to identify relevant content for a range of industry communications channels, such as regional and national Grasslands Society newsletters.

### 3 Project stakeholders (target audiences)

#### 3.1 Stakeholder groups

Table 3.1 outlines the key stakeholder groups covered by this Strategy and their respective communication responsibilities in relation to SFR Communications Coordinator role.

Table 3.1 Key stakeholder groups targeted by the SFR Communications coordinator Implementation Strategy and their requirements

Stakeholder group	Organisations	Key personnel	Communication responsibilities
<b>Project team</b>			
<b>Project management</b>	Macquarie Franklin MLA	Mel Rae (MF) Irene Sobotta (MLA)	Manage work plan implementation Project progress against objectives
<b>Project team</b>	Macquarie Franklin MLA	Mel Rae (MF) Leanne Sherriff (MF) Cat Nicholls (HTR) Irene Sobotta (MLA) Cameron Allan (MLA) Tom Davison (MLA)	Work plan development Project progress against objectives Input into development of Implementation strategy and Implementation plan
<b>Internal stakeholders</b>			
<b>MLA management</b>	MLA	MLA Board/CEO	Awareness of SFR Portfolio progress and achievements
<b>MLA communications</b>	MLA	Sharon McGovern, Communications Manager (MLA)	Regular content from SFR portfolio programs for delivery through key MLA external communications channels (e.g. Feedback magazine, Friday Feedback, and social media)
<b>SFR portfolio project partner communications teams</b>	IA CRC	Ian McDonald Communications Manager (IA CRC)	Provide conduit between IA and MLA Communications team
	MCV: EConnect	Jenni Metcalf	Provide conduit between MCV and MLA Communications team
<b>SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers</b>	Varied (for full details of project team contacts see Appendix 3. Stakeholder contact list)		Provide project snapshots and progress reports Encourage communication and collaboration between project

MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Implementation Strategy

Stakeholder group	Organisations	Key personnel	Communication responsibilities
			teams
<b>External stakeholders</b>			
<b>Red meat producers</b>	Sheep and cattle producers across Australia		Increase awareness of SFR projects, research progress, outcomes and available management tools
<b>Key influencers</b>	Extension service providers, but could also include agents, advisors, agronomists, state departments, retailers, resellers and seed and fertiliser companies		Increase awareness of SFR projects, research progress, outcomes and available management tools
<b>Researchers</b>	Key research organisations and individuals not involved in research investments across the Sustainable Feedbase Resource portfolio but have an interest in the feedbase area		Increase awareness of SFR projects, research progress and outcomes



### 3.2 Communications objectives and tactics

The purpose of communications within and between different MLA SFR stakeholder groups and projects vary (see Appendix 2). It is important to identify and consider the needs of these different stakeholder groups and projects when planning the most effective communication tactics to use and how to achieve the required objectives.

Table 3.2 Objectives of communications required for different stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
<b>Project management stakeholders</b>			
<b>Project management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work plan has been developed and agreed to, key tasks are prioritised</li> <li>Progress against agreed work plan to ensure efficient and effective delivery of role outputs</li> <li>Risks are identified, communicated and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With input from the project team, set realistic and achievable role objectives</li> <li>Deliver timely feedback and support to the role as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone meetings (fortnightly)</li> <li>Email /phone review and input (as required)</li> <li>Milestone reporting (quarterly)</li> <li>Face-to-face meetings (at key decision points, as per work plan)</li> <li>Shared Dropbox with project resources and outputs</li> <li>Shared Smartsheet for project planning and tracking progress</li> <li>MER reporting</li> </ul>
<b>Project team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role alignment and linkages with range of MLA SFR portfolio / strategies</li> <li>Connections and networks with other relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Updates on and outcomes from SFR portfolio programs / projects are being communicated to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage key project team members for input and expertise</li> <li>Deliver timely feedback and support to the role as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular phone meetings</li> <li>Email/phone review and input (as required)</li> <li>Face-to-face meetings (at key decision points as per work plan)</li> <li>Shared Dropbox with project resources and outputs</li> <li>Shared Smartsheet for project</li> </ul>



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Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
	internal and external stakeholders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planning and tracking progress</li> <li>MER reporting</li> </ul>
<b>Internal stakeholders</b>			
<b>MLA management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress and achievements of RD&amp;A covered under the SFR portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of and understand the impact and contribution of the SFR portfolio towards MLA's organisational goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profile of SFR RD&amp;A progress and achievements in key internal and external communications channels</li> <li>Delivery of M&amp;E at key project stages</li> </ul>
<b>MLA communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key messages arising from SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Seasonally-relevant SFR topics for MLA communications</li> <li>Relevant timing to release SFR stories</li> <li>Key contacts and focus for story content</li> <li>MLA tools and resources relevant to the story topic/content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR messages in a timely manner through               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback magazine</li> <li>Friday Feedback</li> <li>MLA Social media channels</li> <li>MLA Events (e.g. Pasture Updates)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provide resources for story development and delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop seasonal SFR calendar across key production regions</li> <li>Participation in content planning sessions</li> <li>Regular phone hook-ups with MLA Communications Manager (monthly)</li> <li>Inclusion in internal communications network</li> </ul>
<b>SFR portfolio project partner communications teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities to extend key project messages through MLA communication delivery channels in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide key project messages through MLA communication channels in a timely manner</li> <li>Provide key contacts and focus for story content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish relationships with SFR portfolio project partner communications teams</li> <li>Regular phone hook-ups to discuss potential stories</li> </ul>
<b>SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief overview of current SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Snapshots and key responsibilities of SFR portfolio project teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share knowledge and experience between SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Understand how individual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build an interactive network of SFR portfolio project teams through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email update</li> <li>Annual FIP symposium</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Communications Strategy

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress and key outcomes from SFR portfolio projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>projects fit within the larger SFR portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular interaction with key project leaders and personnel</li> </ul>
<b>External stakeholders</b>			
<b>Red meat producers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where MLA levies are being invested in feedbase-related RD&amp;A</li> <li>Progress being made with RD&amp;A</li> <li>What information and tools are available to help them increase profitability or sustainable feedbase resource management</li> <li>How other producers are boosting productivity or better managing natural resources using the information and tools developed through MLA RD&amp;A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of MLA-funded RD&amp;A and how it might apply to their farming system</li> <li>Be aware of key research outputs, information and tools that can be used to improve productivity or management of natural resources</li> <li>Employ the outcomes and tools from MLA-funded RD&amp;A under the SFR Portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR portfolio RD&amp;A progress and outcomes to MLA communications team for dissemination through MLA external communications channels</li> <li>Work with MLA communications team and SFR Portfolio program leaders to plan timing / key messages of external communications (relating to SFR portfolio) to achieve maximum impact</li> </ul>
<b>Key influencers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What progress is being made with RD&amp;A</li> <li>What information and tools are available to help red meat producers increase profitability or better manage natural resources</li> <li>How to use information and tools to support producers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of MLA-funded RD&amp;A and how it might apply to regionally-relevant farming systems</li> <li>Be aware of key research outputs, information and tools that producers and advisors can use to improve productivity or natural resource management</li> <li>Use and/or recommend to producers that they use key research outputs, information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR portfolio RD&amp;A progress and outcomes to MLA communications team for dissemination through MLA external communications channels</li> <li>Work with MLA communications team and SFR Portfolio program leaders to plan timing / key messages of external communications (relating to SFR portfolio) to achieve maximum impact</li> </ul>



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MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Communications Strategy

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and tools to improve their productivity and sustainability.</li> </ul>	
<b>Other researchers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What progress is being made with RD&amp;A under the SFR portfolio</li> <li>What research is being carried out that has relevance for their own research</li> <li>What outcomes are being achieved that may have relevance for their own research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers to identify opportunities and synergies across the SFR area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build an interactive network of SFR portfolio project teams through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email update</li> <li>FIP symposium (potentially)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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### 3.3 Communications Coordinator implementation

#### 3.3.1 Role identity

A consistent identity is required for all communications activities delivered through the SFR Communications Coordinator role, particularly where engaging with stakeholder groups outside of the project team.

All communications delivered through this role will require a consistent look and feel, for example email updates, email signatures, templates for collecting project profiles and story content.

#### 3.3.2 Implementation

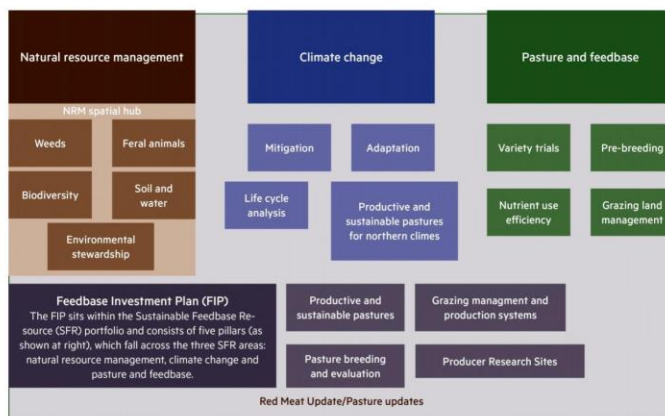
Given the breadth of projects that fall within the SFR portfolio and the differing approaches required for internal and external communications, refer to the Implementation Plan (workplan) for further details on delivery of the Implementation Strategy.



## 4 Appendices

### Appendix 1: Sustainable Feedbase Resources portfolio schematic

#### Sustainable Feedbase Resource Portfolio



### Appendix 2: Sustainable Feedbase Resources portfolio program overview and Communications Coordinator involvement

SFR portfolio area: Natural Resource Management	Project	Lead organisation	Project partners	Communications lead	Phase of project <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early project</li><li>• Mid project</li><li>• Mature project</li><li>• Completed</li></ul>	SFR Communications Coordinator role			
						Internal (within pillar/ program area)	Across portfolio	External role	
Weeds	Silverleaf nightshade								
	B.WEE.0141 Silverleaf nightshade — improving the BMP	MLA	Landcare, local government	SFR coordinator	•	✓	✓	✓✓	
	Biocontrol								
	WBC.0001-9 Weed Biocontrol project (a Rural R&D for Profit project)	MLA	Multiple agencies	SFR coordinator	•	✓	✓	✓✓	
	NBP.0622 Rubber bush management				•	Not a focus for the SFR role			
	NBP.0638 Prickly acacia biocontrol				•			✓	
	NBP.0656 Parkinsonia bioherbicide				• (awaiting final report)				
	WEE.0134 Breed and release of Parkinsonia agents across Qld, NT and WA							✓	
	WEE.0146 Low / non chemical approaches weed control		MLA GRDC	SFR coordinator	•			✓	
	WEE.0147 Host specificity testing bellyache bush agents				•			✓	
Feral animals	Dogs/rabbits/pigs	IA CRC	IA CRC	SFR coordinator	•	x	x	✓	
Soil and water	ERM.0105 Wambiana project	MLA	QDAFF	SFR coordinator	•	✓	✓	✓✓	
	ERM.0213 Dung beetle importation				•				

MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
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	project							
	ERM.0214 Dung beetle field rearing and establishment			SFR coordinator	• (awaiting final report)			✓
Fire	ERM.0094 Rangelands investment consultation, planning — and RD&E plan				•	-		
	NBP.0755 Fire x grazing RD&E investment plan				•	-		
Biodiversity	B.AHE.0303 Wallaby project			SFR coordinator	•	-		
	B.ERM.0088 Biodiversity at Wambiana				•			
Environmental stewardship	Under development			MLA comms	•	-		
Across portfolio	ERM.0098 NRM Spatial Hub	CRC Spatial Information						



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MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Communications Strategy

SFR Portfolio area: climate change	Project	Lead organisation	Project partners	Communications lead	Phase of project	SFR Communications Coordinator role		
					• Early project • Mid project • Mature project • Completed	Internal (within pillar/ program area)	Across portfolio	External
Mitigation	National Livestock Methane Program (NLMP)	MLA	Multiple agencies	MLA	•	X	X	✓
	Reducing Emissions from Livestock Research Program (RELRP)			-	•	X	X	✓
	Climate Clever Beef			-	•			
Adaptation	Northern adaptation project	MLA		MLA	•			
	SLA2030 Southern Livestock Adaptation project	MLA		Maybe	•			
	Managing Climate Variability (MCV)	Multiple RDCs	Multiple RDCs	EConnect	•	X	✓✓	✓
Life cycle analysis	Beef and Lamb to the USA			MLA	•			
	Northern Beef			MLA	•			
	Grass fed			MLA	•			
	30 year trend study			MLA	•			



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MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Communications Strategy

SFR Portfolio area: Pasture and feedbase	Project	Lead organisation	Project partners	Communications lead	Phase of project ● Early project ● Mid project ● Mature project ● Completed	SFR Communications Coordinator role		
						Internal (within pillar/ program area)	Across portfolio	External
Pasture breeding and evaluation (FIP pillar one)								
Pre-breeding	PBE.0037 (legumes)	MLA	DAFWA/UWA	SFR Coordinator	●	✓	✓	✓
	PBE.0038 (phalaris)			-				
Variety trials	Pasture Variety Trial Network (PVTN)	MLA		SFR Coordinator	●	✓	✓	✓✓
	P.PSH.0687 Pasture Trial Network	MLA	Seed companies	SFR Coordinator	●	✓	✓	✓✓
Mixed sward evaluation	Pasture establishment and persistence							
Novel species	PBE.0027 Teder		SeedNet	MLA??	●	✓	✓	✓
Productive sustainable pastures (FIP pillar two)								
Optimising phosphorus supply to pastures	PUE.0102 013 104 105 Nutrient use efficiency			SFR coordinator	● Only 0104 is current			
	Phosphorus-efficient legume pasture systems			SFR coordinator	-			
	An assessment and benchmarking of phosphorus				-			
Agronomy packages and companion species	PSP.0001 Tropical pastures in NSW and WA			SFR coordinator	●	✓	✓	✓
	Biserulla etc, estab, management and utilisation			SFR coordinator				
Optimising nitrogen supply	B.PSP.0013 Pasture legumes in mixed farming zones of WA and NSW	MLA/AW/Murdoch Uni		SFR coordinator	●	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Establishment costs	Reducing the cost of pasture establishment			SFR coordinator				
Healthy soils (see NRM area of SFR portfolio)								
Pasture health								
Pasture health review								
Managing soil-borne disease in sub-clover pastures	PSP.0005 Root disease in legumes		UWA	SFR coordinator	●	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓



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MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator  
Communications Strategy

<b>Grazing management and production systems (FIP pillar three)</b>								
Precision technology	Potential for information technologies to improve decision making for the southern livestock industries							
	Precision Ag fertiliser project							
	GSM.0010 Biomass estimation	MLA		SFR coordinator	•	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Livestock system design	EverGraze	MLA	Multiple RDCs	SFR coordinator to some extent	•			✓✓
Integrating feed sources	Enrich	MLA	Multiple RDCs		•			✓✓
Dual purpose crops	GSM.0008 Grazing crops NSW and Vic			SFR coordinator	•	✓	✓	✓✓



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## **7.2 Appendix 2: MER plan**



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# MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING PLAN

**Sustainable Feedbase Resources Portfolio –  
Communications Coordinator Role**

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March 2017





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## 1 Introduction

Effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting is critical for projects to stay on track, keep stakeholders informed about project progress against objectives, measure project impact and ultimately ensure the success of the project.

Evaluation enables the success of a project in meeting its objectives to be assessed, and to identify and reflect upon lessons learnt. The evaluation process identifies *what* data to capture, *how* to best capture this data and what the *analysis* of the captured data will tell us about the project. A monitoring and evaluation plan can also identify mechanisms that enable this information to be acted upon and used to improve the delivery outcomes of the project.

Monitoring involves setting targets and milestones throughout the project to measure progress and achievement, and to assess if the inputs (activities) are producing the planned outputs (outcomes). This will help ensure all required actions are proceeding as planned and budgeted, and they are achieving the desired project objectives.

This document presents the monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) plan for the role of Communications Coordinator for the Sustainable Feedbase Resources portfolio within MLA. It is directly linked with the *MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator Implementation Strategy V2 (May 2016)*.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Scope for the MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator role

The purpose of this role is to work with Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Sustainable Feedbase Resources (SFR) team to develop and implement internal communications strategies for research, development and adoption (RD&A) activities within the team's portfolio. Refer to the *MLA Sustainable Feedbase Resources Communications Coordinator Implementation Strategy V2 (May 2016)* for more information.

### 2.2 Role objectives

The objectives of the SFR Communications Coordinator role are to:

- improve internal communications within and between the SFR portfolio programs and projects;
- support MLA to showcase the opportunities created by SFR RD&A to improve the productivity and sustainable natural resource management of the feedbase resource; and
- through assisting MLA to enhance awareness of SFR RD&A outcomes and tools, encourage cattle and sheep producers in Australia to improve their productivity through implementation of improved practices.



### 3 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan

#### 3.1 Purpose

The purpose of the SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan is to enable achievements resulting from the role to be recognised and attributed, enabling MLA to understand the cost-benefit of the role and to provide the information required to make a decision at the designated “stop-go” point in February 2018, on the future of the role. This MER plan will also enable adaptive management to be incorporated into project delivery by identifying and resolving any issues that may be impacting the ability of the project to meet its objectives, as the project progresses.

#### 3.2 Key Performance Indicators

Underpinning the project objectives, the following key performance indicators (KPIs) have been developed to clearly measure the project progress:

1. Project delivery tracking to workplan and budget.
2. A quarterly e-newsletter produced and distributed to the internal project stakeholders, with an initial 50% opening rate by respondents, which increases by 5% per annum over the life of the project.
3. A strategy for the development of internal stakeholder tools and resource packages to be developed (“I want to package” development strategy).
4. A seasonal calendar developed for the MLA Communications team, which summarises the key pasture management activities (relevant to MLA membership) by month for different regions across Australia, to enable MLA external communications to be targeted and timely. Calendar to be developed by September 2016 and reviewed annually.
5. A minimum of 16 story briefs provided to the MLA Communications Team each year for use in Friday feedback and Feedback Magazine (based on assuming one per Feedback Magazine, one per month for Friday Feedback), with 75% published.

\* KPI 3 relates directly to KPIs 4.2.1.1 and 4.2.2.1 listed in the MLA Strategic Plan (the tasks relevant to the Communications Coordinator MER Plan are underlined):

*4.2.1.1 Pasture productivity: northern Australia*

- a. *Pasture options developed and delivered that increase pasture productivity and persistence*
- b. *Guidelines packaged to increase utilisation of northern pastures*

*4.2.2.1 Pasture productivity: southern Australia*

- Pasture management options developed and delivered that increase pasture productivity and persistence*
- a. *Cost of production reduced by developing and delivering guidelines for increasing efficiency of input resources*
  - b. *Guidelines packaged to increase utilisation of southern pastures*

### 3.3 Stakeholders

There are a number of stakeholders with significant roles in this project who will expect the project to deliver on its objectives.

Table 1 Objectives of communications required for different stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
<b>Project management stakeholders</b>			
<b>Project management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work plan has been developed and agreed to, key tasks are prioritised</li> <li>Progress against agreed work plan to ensure efficient and effective delivery of role outputs</li> <li>Risks are identified, communicated and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With input from the project team, set realistic and achievable role objectives</li> <li>Deliver timely feedback and support to the role as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone meetings (fortnightly)</li> <li>Email /phone review and input (as required)</li> <li>Milestone reporting (quarterly)</li> <li>Face-to-face meetings (at key decision points, as per work plan)</li> <li>Shared Dropbox with project resources and outputs</li> <li>Shared Smartsheet for project planning and tracking progress</li> <li>MER evaluation and reporting, and adoption of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Project team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role alignment and linkages with range of MLA SFR portfolio / strategies</li> <li>Connections and networks with other relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Updates on and outcomes from SFR portfolio programs / projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage key project team members for input and expertise</li> <li>Deliver timely feedback and support to the role as required</li> <li>Provide evaluation data, as outlined in MER plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular phone meetings</li> <li>Email/phone review and input (as required)</li> <li>Face-to-face meetings (at key decision points as per work plan)</li> <li>Shared Dropbox with project resources and outputs</li> </ul>

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
	are being communicated to internal and external stakeholders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Smartsheet for project planning and tracking progress</li> <li>Collation of MER data</li> <li>MER evaluation and reporting, and adoption of continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Internal stakeholders</b>			
<b>MLA management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress and achievements of RD&amp;A covered under the SFR portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of and understand the impact and contribution of the SFR portfolio towards MLA's organisational goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profile of SFR RD&amp;A progress and achievements in key internal and external communications channels</li> <li>Review of MER updates as part of milestone reports</li> </ul>
<b>MLA communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key messages arising from SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Seasonally-relevant SFR topics for MLA communications</li> <li>Relevant timing to release SFR stories</li> <li>Key contacts and focus for story content</li> <li>MLA tools and resources relevant to the story topic/content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR messages in a timely manner through               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback magazine</li> <li>Friday Feedback</li> <li>MLA Social media channels</li> <li>MLA Events (e.g. Pasture Updates)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provide resources for story development and delivery</li> <li>Provide evaluation analytics to the project team as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop seasonal SFR calendar across key production regions</li> <li>Regular updates from MLA communication team on content planning session outcomes.</li> <li>Regular phone hook-ups with MLA Communications Manager (monthly)</li> <li>Inclusion in internal communications network</li> <li>Collation of MER data from website analytics</li> </ul>

SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
<b>SFR portfolio project team leaders and researchers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief overview of current SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Snapshots and key responsibilities of SFR portfolio project teams</li> <li>Progress and key outcomes from SFR portfolio projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share knowledge and experience between SFR portfolio projects</li> <li>Understand how individual projects fit within the larger SFR portfolio</li> <li>Contribute to identifying key messages and outcomes from their work that can be communicated to other internal stakeholders or through MLA's external communications with members.</li> <li>Engage with M&amp;E activities where required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MER evaluation and reporting, and adoption of continuous improvement</li> <li>Build an interactive network of SFR portfolio project teams through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email update</li> <li>SFR portfolio online communications hub</li> <li>Annual FIP symposium</li> </ul> </li> <li>Regular interaction with key project leaders and personnel</li> <li>Easy to use feedback sheets or surveys for them to complete</li> </ul>
<b>PRS producers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities and learnings from other PRS sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share their knowledge and experience with other SFR projects</li> <li>Share their trial experiences with other producers not directly engaged in the trial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter</li> <li>Networking events (e.g. PRS workshop, pasture symposium etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>External stakeholders</b>			
<b>Red meat producers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where MLA levies are being invested in feedbase-related RD&amp;A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of MLA-funded RD&amp;A and how it might apply to their farming system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR portfolio RD&amp;A progress and outcomes to MLA communications team for</li> </ul>



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SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress being made with RD&amp;A</li> <li>What information and tools are available to help producers increase profitability or sustainable feedbase resource management</li> <li>How other producers are boosting productivity or better managing natural resources using the information and tools developed through MLA RD&amp;A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of key research outputs, information and tools that can be used to improve productivity or management of natural resources</li> <li>Employ the outcomes and tools from MLA-funded RD&amp;A under the SFR Portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dissemination through MLA external communications channels (Friday Feedback, Feedback Magazine, MLA website, MLA social media channels)</li> <li>Work with MLA communications team and SFR Portfolio program leaders to plan timing / key messages of external communications (relating to SFR portfolio) to achieve maximum impact</li> <li>MLA Communications team to provide MER data from Traction and website analytics</li> </ul>
<b>Key influencers &amp; Researchers outside of SFR portfolio projects</b>	<p>Key influencers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What progress is being made with RD&amp;A</li> <li>What information and tools are available to help red meat producers increase profitability or better manage natural resources</li> <li>How to use information and tools to support producers</li> </ul> <p>Researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of MLA-funded RD&amp;A and how it might apply to regionally-relevant farming systems</li> <li>Be aware of key research outputs, information and tools that producers and advisors can use to improve productivity or natural resource management</li> <li>Use and/or recommend to producers that they use key research outputs, information and tools to improve their productivity and sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver key SFR portfolio RD&amp;A progress and outcomes to MLA communications team for dissemination through MLA external communications channels (Friday Feedback, Feedback Magazine, MLA website, MLA social media channels)</li> <li>Work with MLA communications team and SFR Portfolio program leaders to plan timing / key messages of external communications (relating to SFR portfolio)</li> </ul>



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SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Stakeholder group	What do they want to know	What do we want them to do	Key tactics and tools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What research is being carried out that has relevance for their own research</li><li>What outcomes are being achieved that may have relevance for their own research.</li></ul>		<p>portfolio) to achieve maximum impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pasture Symposium</li></ul>

#### **4 Monitoring and evaluation plan**

The MER plan for the SFR Communications Coordinator is presented in Table 2. It indicates the specific monitoring questions that will be used to answer key evaluation questions, the relevant indicators based on the project workplan, sources or methods used to obtain the data, and the responsibilities, timelines, budget and reporting requirements for monitoring and evaluation activities.

## SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Table 2 SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

KPI	Indicator	Monitoring			Evaluation & Reporting		
		Data source / method	Responsibility	Time-frame	Who will be involved?	Reporting (What & to who)	Timeframe
Project delivery tracking to agreed workplan	SFR Communications Coordinator role defined and implementation strategy developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MLA project manager approves</li> <li>Reviewed every six months</li> </ul>	MR / IS	June 2016, then 6 monthly (aligning with milestone reporting)	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against in six monthly milestone reports	Six monthly
	Workplan agreed on and shared by project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MLA project manager approves workplan</li> <li>Link to workplan shared with all project team members</li> </ul>	IS MR	October 2016 Ongoing	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against workplan development progress at monthly team meetings	Monthly
	Workplan is reviewed regularly (monthly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track progress against tasks</li> <li>Workplan adjusted as required</li> </ul>	IS/MR	Monthly	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against workplan delivery at project team meetings	Monthly
	Project risk assessment completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MLA project manager approves risk assessment</li> </ul>	IS	September 2016	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against workplan delivery at project team meetings	Quarterly, around newsletter time
Project delivery tracking to agreed budget	Actual budget aligns with budget available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly budget update report from MF</li> </ul>	MR	Monthly	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against workplan delivery at project team meetings (quarterly)	Monthly
A quarterly e-newsletter produced and distributed to the internal project stakeholders, with an initial	4 x e-newsletters produced per annum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First newsletter released October 2016</li> <li>E-newsletters on file (online hub)</li> </ul>	CN, MR	Quarterly	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	Report against workplan delivery at project team meetings (quarterly)	Quarterly

## SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

KPI	Indicator	Monitoring			Evaluation & Reporting		
		Data source / method	Responsibility	Time-frame	Who will be involved?	Reporting (What & to who)	Timeframe
50% opening rate by respondents, which increases by 5% per annum over the life of the project						and in six monthly progress reports to SFR Communications Coordinator contract manager	Milestone reports: 15 Feb 2017 15 August 2017 31 Jan 2018
	E-newsletters are high quality and contain relevant information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analytics obtained following release of every e-newsletter</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback (e.g. interview, short survey of targeted stakeholders) at 6 &amp; 12 months, if required</li> </ul>	CN CN	quarterly March 2017, October 2017	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 August 2017 31 Jan 2018
	E-newsletter recipients are engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analytics obtained following release of every e-newsletter</li> <li>Register of contacts from recipients via e-newsletter</li> <li>Register of requests to follow up story ideas</li> </ul>	CN CN CN	Quarterly ongoing ongoing	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 Feb 2017 15 Aug 2017 31 Jan 2018
Strategy / plan for development of relevant internal stakeholder tools and resource packages (I want to packages).	Strategy and plan developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan delivered to MLA</li> <li>Tools/resource packages promoted through e-newsletter</li> <li>Where appropriate, tools/resource packages available on MLA website (and other comms)</li> </ul>	CN CN	April 2017 Quarterly	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 Feb 2017 15 Aug 2017 31 Jan 2018
			CN / SM	As required			



SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Monitoring					Evaluation & Reporting		
KPI	Indicator	Data source / method	Responsibility	Time-frame	Who will be involved?	Reporting (What & to who)	Timeframe
		channels) for access by external stakeholders					
	Packages are valued and utilised by internal project stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online access analytics available quarterly</li> </ul>	CN	Quarterly	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 August 2017 31 Jan 2018
	Packages are valued and utilised by external project stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of tools/resource packages made available on MLA website</li> <li>Package uploads from MLA website reviewed quarterly</li> <li>Number of tools/resources packages featured at MLA-funded Pasture Updates events</li> </ul>	CN Kellie P / SM IS	6 monthly Quarterly Annually	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC)	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	Annually 15 February 2017 31 Jan 2018
A seasonal calendar developed for the MLA Communications team, which summarises the key farming activities by month for different regions across Australia, to enable MLA external communications to be targeted and timely. Calendar to be developed by September 2016 and reviewed annually.	Seasonal calendar produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seasonal calendar approved by MLA Communications team</li> </ul>	CN/MR	October 2016	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC) & MLA Comms Team	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 February 2017
	Seasonal calendar being used by MLA Communications team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal feedback regarding seasonal calendar provided to project team from MLA Communications team</li> </ul>	SM/KP	12 months after finalising	Project team (MLA, MF, HTRC) & MLA Comms Team	To project team & include summary in MLA progress reports	15 Aug 2017
Story briefs provided to the MLA Communications Team for use in each <i>Feedback</i> magazine and <i>Friday Feedback</i> , with 75% published	16 story briefs per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of story briefs submitted to MLA Communications team</li> </ul>	CN CN (in collaboration with KP)	From June 2016 onwards, Monthly	CN, MLA comms team	Include update in milestone report	Six monthly, 15 Feb 2017 15 Aug 2017 31 Jan 2018



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SFR Communications Coordinator MER Plan

Monitoring					Evaluation & Reporting		
KPI	Indicator	Data source / method	Responsibility	Time-frame	Who will be involved?	Reporting (What & to who)	Timeframe
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of story briefs used in Friday Feedback and Feedback Magazine</li> </ul>					
	SFR story briefs are relevant and of interest to external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analytics from Friday Feedback where SFR story briefs are featured</li> </ul>	SM	Monthly update at project team meeting	MLA comms team	Project team to gather feedback from MLA analytics as required	Monthly



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## **7.3 Appendix3: Newsletter analytics**



<b>Edition one</b>	<b>Open rate</b>	<b>Click rate</b>				
	<b>67.7</b>	<b>30.5</b>				
<b>Story</b>	<b>Unique pageviews</b>	<b>Average time on page</b>	<b>Word length</b>	<b>Story type</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Time taken to read article online</b>
Sub-clover genome offers rapid gains	42	1:46	1609	Research update	No links to external content	
Phalaris transcriptome yields bright future	37	2:48	868	Research update	No links to external content	
Tips & tools for feedbase events	33	1:01	1421	Tips and tools	No links to external content	
Pasture Updates — taking the next step	20	0:31	294	Tips and tools	No links to external content	
Red Meat Updates 2016	15	3:28	652	Photos and events	One link to external content	
Participatory research yields results	12			Report download	Direct download of PRS report	
Refreshed EverGraze tools support better decision-making	3			Product update	Link through to EverGraze website	
Producers embrace training opportunities	325	3:00	1437	Case study	Also delivered through Friday Feedback	
<b>Edition two</b>	<b>Open rate</b>	<b>Click rate</b>				
	<b>46.9</b>	<b>31.2</b>				
<b>Story</b>	<b>Unique pageviews</b>	<b>Average time on page</b>	<b>Word length</b>	<b>Story type</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Time taken to read article online</b>
Getting producers excited about research	38	5:25	1225	Research update	Few links to external content	
Tedera takes one step closer	37	1:45	643	Research update	Two links to external content	2mins (by external contact)
FIP symposium	36	3:54	574	Photos and presentations	Many links to external content	
Communicating research	15	4:36	574	Tips and tools	Many links to external content	
Conservation co-exists with profit	13	1:20	1478	Research update	Few links to external content	
	<b>139</b>					
Alison Napier case study		365	1371 shares on facebook			
<b>Edition three</b>	<b>Open rate</b>	<b>Click rate</b>				
	<b>57.10%</b>	<b>33.30%</b>				
<b>Story</b>	<b>Unique pageviews</b>	<b>Average time on page</b>	<b>Word length</b>	<b>Story type</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Time taken to read article online</b>
#P4Pastures	32	3:01		New project		
Dual-purpose crops	23	3:35		Research update	Also delivered through Friday Feedback	
Profitable grazing	21	0:58		New project		
Feedbase investment plan wrap-up	19	0:38		Research update		
Collaborative research	19	3:10		Opinion piece		
Biocontrol project exceeds expectations	8	0:56		Research update		
Climatedogs	8	0:27		Project approach		
Improving productivity in northern pastures	6	0:41		Journal article		
Impact of climate change on mixed farming systems	4	Not an MLA link		Journal article		
Rabbit control	3	0:52		Research update		
	<b>143</b>					
<b>Friday feedback</b>						
Dual-purpose crops	401	3:35				

#### **7.4 Appendix 4: Summary of story briefs supplied to MLA Communications Team**

## MLA SFR stories and progress to 31 July 2017

Total stories published in *Feedbase Focus* (three editions): 21

Total stories published in Friday Feedback (includes story ideas supplied and stories written by *Feedbase Focus* team):3

Total stories published in Feedback Magazine (includes story ideas supplied and stories written by *Feedbase Focus* team): 11

Story brief	Contact	Angle	Progress	End use
Weed biocontrol Snapshots x eight	Various	Eight short snapshot on current MLA WBC projects.	Summary story developed by Kylie Nicholls June 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Aug/Sept 2016
Legume nodulation survey	Belinda Hackney, NSW LSS	A national nodulation survey of sub-clover pastures across NSW and WA has revealed that more than 90% of pastures surveyed had inadequate nodulation, even though effective rhizobia species were present in many cases.	Story brief sent to SM 20 July 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Feb/Mar 2017
Fast track rhizobia identification	Sofie De Meyer, Murdoch University	The rapid throughput rhizobia identification technique (MALDI-tof) — is now commercially available in Australia. <sup>11</sup>	Story brief sent to SM 20 July 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Nov/Dec 20162017
PRS workshop: project update	Belinda Hackney, NSW LSS	Hardseeded legumes offer increased production and fill seasonal feed gap	Story brief sent to KP 16/7/16	
Red Meat Updates: case study	Alison Napier (beef producer Tasmania)	GH Napier and son beef operation business strategy focus	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Nov/Dec 2016

Story brief	Contact	Angle	Progress	End use
Red Meat Updates presentation	Shane Thomson, Holbrook (veterinarian)	Maximising herd fertility	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	<i>Friday Feedback</i>
Red Meat Updates presentation	Richard Culvenor, CSIRO	Improved phalaris cultivars	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	
Red Meat Updates presentation	Mark Trotter, UNE	Real Time Biomass Estimation	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	
Red Meat Updates presentation	Basil Doonan, Macquarie Franklin	Focus of the top 20 beef producers	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	
Red Meat Updates case study	Jock Hughes, sheep producer Tasmania	Upskilling pasture management (Pasture Principles)	Story brief sent to SM 2 August 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> May/June 2017 <i>Friday Feedback</i> 19 May 2017
Red Meat Updates summary article	Macquarie Franklin	Overview of Red Meat Updates	Story brief sent to KP 8 August 2016	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Aug/Sep 2016
PRS workshop: project update	Paul Sanford, DAFWA	Incorporating legumes into kikuyu can boost winter feed production	Story brief sent to KP 16/9/16	
PRS workshop: project update	Richard Simpson, CSIRO	Phosphorus efficient legumes	Story brief sent to KP 16/9/16	
PRS workshop: project update	Kevin Smith	Victorian producers measuring phalaris persistence	Story brief sent to KP 16/9/16	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> May/June 2017
PRS workshop: project update	Suzanne Boschma, NSW DPI	Subtropical pastures	Story brief sent to KP 16/9/16	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Feb/Mar 2017
PRS workshop: project update	Martin Barbetti, UWA	Subclover root disease	Story brief sent to KP 20/9/16	<i>Feedback Magazine</i> Feb/Mar 2017
Vicky Geddes case study	Annabelle Beale, Fairfax Media	Originally run in Fairfax newspapers	Sent article to Elke Hocking, GSSA	<i>GSSA December newsletter</i>

Feedbase Focus (Edition One)				
Sub-clover genome	Phil Nichols (DAFWA)	Genome sequence of sub-clover and impact for producers		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (edition One) <i>Feedback Magazine</i> Aug/Sept 2016
Phalaris transcriptome	Kevin Smith			<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One)
Pasture updates	Update	Overview of the program		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One)
Red Meat Update case study	Mel Rae	Case study of successful event management		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One)
Tips and Tools for events	Mel Rae	As per title		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One)
PRS update	Various	Update for FIP symposium Nov 2017		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One) FIP Symposium background reading
<i>EverGraze</i> website	Geoff Saul	Upgrade of <i>EverGraze</i> website and tools	Finished and sent to Kellie (FF) and Elke Hocking (GSSA) 22/9/16	<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One) <i>Friday Feedback</i> GSSA newsletter
<i>EverGraze</i> case study	Andrew and Jill Stewart, sheep producers Victoria	Case study focused on LTEM, WFGS and Lambs Alive training impacts on farm	Friday Feedback 11/11/16	<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition One) <i>Friday Feedback</i>

Feedbase Focus (Edition Two)				
Tedera	Dean Revell	Update on recent seed increase and path to commercialization	Waiting for feedback from Cameron and Irene	<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Two) <i>MLA Feedback Magazine</i> <i>May/June 2017</i>
From wow to how	Belinda Hackney	Successful approach to extension	Waiting for feedback from Belinda	<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Two)
Conservation coexists with profit	Lin Schwarzkopf	Wambiana biodiversity		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Two)
Communicating research	Cat Nicholls	Tips for effective communication		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Two)
FIP symposium	Various	FIP symposium wrap-up		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Two)

Feedbase Focus (Edition Three)				
Collaborative research	Cameron Allan	As title suggests		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
Rabbit biocontrol	Tarnya Cox	Community involvement in project delivery		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
Parkinsonia biocontrol	Raghu Sathyamurthy	Community involvement in project delivery		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
Climate dogs	Graeme			<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
Dual-purpose crops	Andrew Moore and Shawn McGrawth			<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three) <i>Friday Feedback</i> GSSA newsletter
FIP wrap-up	Irene Sobotta	As title suggests		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
#P4Pastures project	Richard Simpson	Phosphorus efficient pastures project		<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)
Profitable Grazing Systems webinar				<i>Feedbase Focus</i> (Edition Three)

MLA Feedback Magazine (August   September 2017)			
Article title	Topic	FIP link	Researcher   Producer
Finding a winter feed boost	Using legumes to boost winter production in kikuyu pastures	Sub-tropical pastures (WA)	Paul Sanford
Serradella success	Producer case study highlighting the use of serradella to boost winter production of kikuyu pastures	Sub-tropical pastures (WA)	Alan and Bec Hoggart, Condingup, WA
Seeking real biomass data	Producer insights into tree biomass project	Biomass estimation	Karl Andersson   Brad Wooldridge   Will Green   Martin Oppneheimer

Story briefs supplied to MLA comms (Red Meat Updates — July 2017)			
Contact	Topic   focus	Progress	End use
Ellie Wheeler, Landfall	Family beef operation that extends along the value chain from paddock to plate (retail butchery) Business insights and multi-generational management	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA
Basil Doonan, Macquarie Franklin	Management triumphs over technology every time Best practice management is more important than adopting new technology with sub-standard management	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA
Charles Downie, Bothwell	Data management drives decision making across variable land classes	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA
Chris McQueen, Flinders Island	Simple yet effective changes can boost productivity and profitability Measure and monitor to manage	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA
Tom Bull, LambPro	Ewe hogget joining: Maximum of 20% of total flock joined Manage weight, days of age and growth path Manage two-year-old recovery	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA
James Hills, TIA	Irrigation scheduling for optimal pasture production	Sent to MLA comms 2 August 2017	TBA